

The Churches of the City

Hendersonville is a city of church-goers, there are six white churches in the city, their aggregate enrollment is about three fourths of the possible maximum. Their aggregate Sunday school enrollment is about 40 per cent greater than the white enrollment in the city schools. Their aggregate annual contributions are about \$15,000, which is one percent. of the aggregate real and personal property listed for taxation by the white population of the city.

These figures are derived from information compiled last year under the auspices of the Layman's Missionary Movement. In giving thenumerical strength of the churches, the word "enrollment" was used rather than "membership" because the latter word varies in its meaning. In some churches the Episcopal church, for instance,—all baptized persons, regardless of age are "members", but for the purpose of the above enumeration infants were not included, and the figures given were taken from the communicant list.

Of all religious bodies, the Baptists are the most numerous in Hendersonville. This denomination has two churches; The First Baptist Church with an enrollment of 367, and the East Hendersonville Baptist Church with an enrollment of 99.

Next in numerical strength comes the Methodist church with an enrollment of 383. The Presbyterians have 189 and the Episcopalians 67. Figures for the Roman Catholic church were not obtainable though that church now has a resident minister and has recently erected a handsome parsonage.

The statistics of Sunday school enrollment are as follows: First Baptist, 200; East Hendersonville Baptist, 97; Methodist, 300; Presbyterian, 100; Episcopal, 51; total, 748; (which is about 2-3 of the school enrollment). The average Sunday school attendance is about two-thirds of the Sunday school enrollment.

The total annual contributions of the five churches, as reported last year, amounted to \$14,930.04, which is \$13.28 per capita. Of this total, \$2,677.96 (or \$2.38 per capita) was for missions, and \$12,252.08 (or \$10.89 per capita for other purposes.

Bearing in mind that these figures represent only the white churches, and Hendersonville's churches are one per cent. of the assessed valuation of the total real and personal property of the white population of the city.

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH.

The history of the First Baptist church is a part of the history of Hendersonville, and from its organization to the present, and among its members have been men prominent in the affairs of the town and county. Back in the forties, when Hendersonville was a village of not more than a dozen houses, a few faithful Baptists, under the leadership of Rev. James Blythe, who was for many years the pastor, formed this church and erected as a place of worship a small brick building at the place of the old cemetery, in South Hendersonville; this house served the purposes of the church from about the year 1845 to 1887, during which time the church was prosperous under the pastorates of Revs. James Blythe, N. Bowen, G. S. Jones, E. Allison, D. B. Nelson, W. A. Nelson, Joseph E. Carter and J. B. Boone. The church building being no longer sufficiently commodious for its growing congregations, the question of a larger building, at a more convenient location arose, when to solve the problem, Deacon David Garren donated to the church that lot extending from 4th to 5th avenue West, where the present church and parsonage stand, where the erection of the new church building was largely the work of Rev. G. S. Jones. At the new, and present location, the church has been prosperous, with a membership of nearly four hundred, under the pastorates of Revs. D. A. Glenn, S. S. Gibson, Wm. Richards R. R. Love, M. L. Lawson, John Hughes, and K. W. Cawthon. About two years ago, to meet the growing demands of the church, another enlargement became necessary, when following the plans of Rev. G. Jones, Pastor K. W. Cawthon took the matter in hand, and with great skill and ability accomplished the completion of the present splendid church edifice.

Prominent among the large membership of this church from its organization to the present, in addition to the pastors above mentioned, have been such men as Peter Stradley, J.

J. Blythe, J. Williams, Judge C. M. Pace, Rev. J. C. C. Dunford, Dr. R. H. Lewis, W. A. Smith, N. Buckner, Thos. J. Rickman, Rev. M. W. Egerton, C. F. Toms, C. R. Whitaker, O. V. F. Blythe, and Revs. R. V. Miller, R. N. Pratt, and Rev. James Justice, missionary to Argentina.

Mr. C. J. Hawkins is the oldest living member, having joined the church in 1860.

EAST HENDERSONVILLE BAPTIST CHURCH.

The East Hendersonville Baptist church,—the youngest church in Hendersonville though it occupies the oldest church building,—was founded six or seven years ago as a mission of the First Baptist church. The new Presbyterian church having just been erected, the wooden structure which the Presbyterians had been using for about half a century was purchased for the East Hendersonville Baptist mission and was moved to its

here about sixteen years ago and was the first pastor to hold services every Sunday. A few years later the mission became a McIver. Durin gthe pastorate of Mr. McIver's successor, Rev. R. B. Grinnan, a new church building was erected in 1905,—an attractive and commodious edifice with a seating capacity of 425.

After a faithful and efficient service of nine and a half years, Dr. Grinnan resigned last September to accept a call to the Woodrow Memorial Church of Columbia, S. C. Since then the church has been without a regular pastor. Rev. J. M. Shive is now the temporary supply.

A change in the seating arrangements of the church has recently been decided upon. The chairs now in use are to be discarded and replaced by pews which have already been ordered and will shortly be installed.

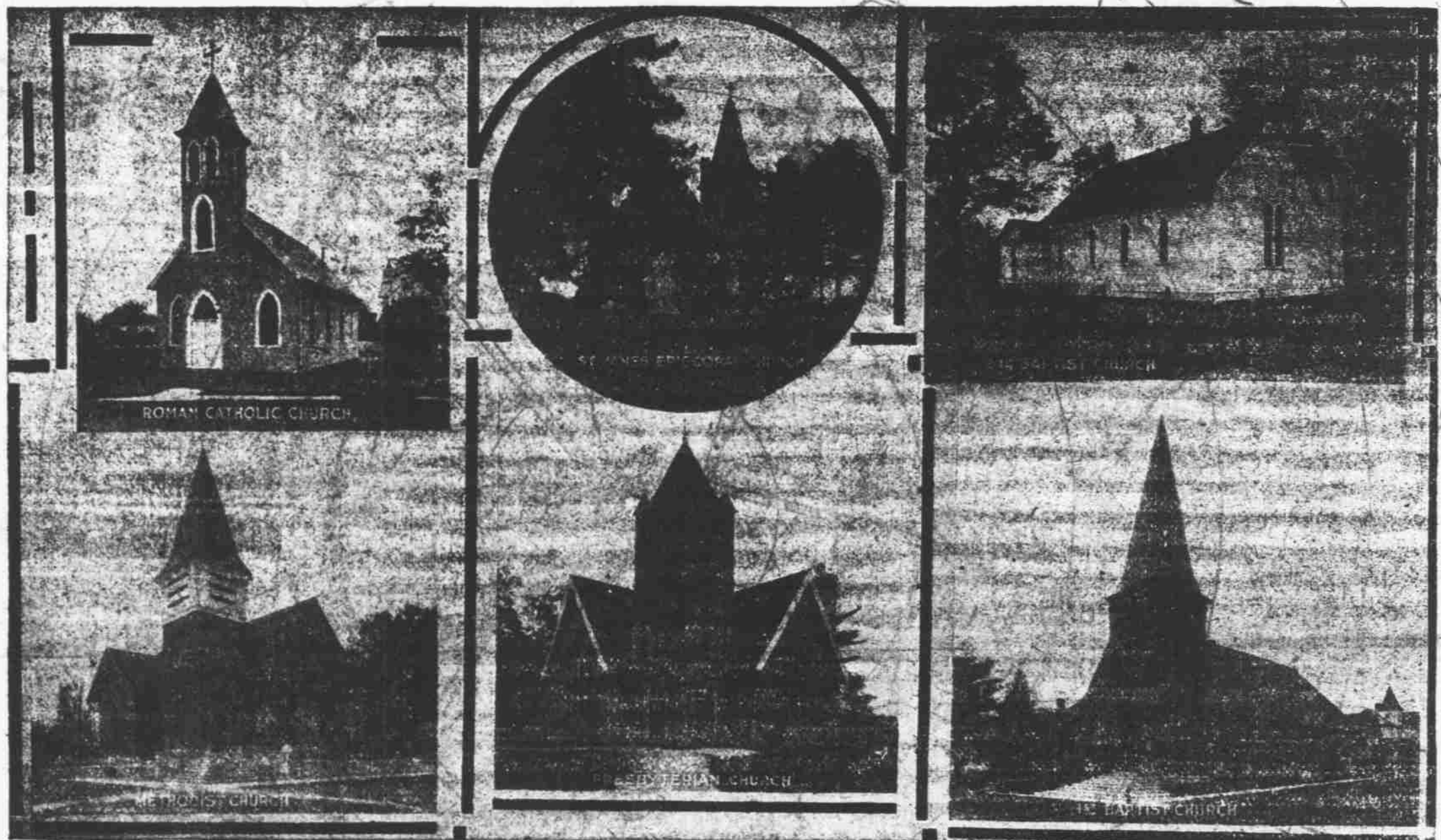
The membership of the church is about two hundred.

and in August of the same year it was dedicated by Bishop Haid. The congregation was quite small; and, for a number of years, the passing years brought steady growth; and in August 1912 Father Marion built the present handsome rectory and is now occupying it.

Both church and rectory are free from debt; the congregation is faithful and steadily increasing in number; and the pastor and members look forward with confidence to a bright future for St. Mary's church.

ST. JAMES' CHURCH.

St. James' church, the oldest church building in Hendersonville still standing on its original site, was erected during the storm and stress of the civil war. The deed for the lot was made to Thomas C. Evans, Thomas G. Massie, Wm. M. Shipp and W. D. Miller, as wardens and vestrymen and trustees. From the fact that these men are described



present location beyond the depot.

Two or three years later,—on Sunday, September 19, 1909,—the East Hendersonville Baptist church was organized. The Twenty-two members were received by letter. The first official act of the new church was to take a collection for foreign missions, the collection amounting to \$10.01.

The first pastor of the church was Rev. A. I. Justice. A few years later, pressure of other duties compelled him to resign the pastorate. His successor was Rev. R. D. Carroll, the present pastor.

The church has grown steadily and rapidly. Its present membership is 103.

HENDERSONVILLE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH.

The Hendersonville Presbyterian church was established as a mission before the civil war. The frame building in which the services were held for so many years, is the only ante-bellum church building still standing in Hendersonville; but it no longer stands on its original site, having been sold to the Baptists and moved across the railroad.

Beginning as a mission with only occasional services, the Presbyterian church gradually increased its strength. Rev. E. A. Sample (who is well known in Hendersonville and whose family are still residents of this city and loyal members of the church) served the congregation faithfully for many years though he was able to give only a part of his time to this mission. His successor was Rev. S. C. Caldwell, who came

HENDERSONVILLE METHODIST CHURCH.

The Hendersonville Methodist church was organized about sixty-five years ago. For a strong self-supporting church.

Dr. Caldwell was succeeded by Rev. D. M. number of years afterwards, it was merely one of the preaching places on a large circuit with monthly visit from the pastor, sometimes on Sunday and sometimes during the week. This charge was known as the Mills River circuit until 1888 when Hendersonville and Shaw's Creek were organized into the Hendersonville station.

As early as 1852 the Methodists had a small church building here and it was enlarged and improved in 1856. This building accommodated the congregation until 1890 when the present attractive and commodious structure was erected. The following year a parsonage was added.

Several years ago the growth of the congregation had reached the point where increased accommodations were absolutely necessary, and a large annex was erected. Last year a fine pipe organ was installed.

The present membership of the church is about 400. The Sunday school has a very large enrollment, and steady growth is shown in all departments of church work. The pastor is Rev. A. L. Stanford.

ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH.

St. Mary's church (Roman Catholic), located at the corner of North Church street and Seventh avenue West, was built in 1900,

as "wardens and vestrymen," it seems that, even at that early date (1863), the church was organized as a parish. The Convention Journals of the Diocese of North Carolina the church was used as a mission church and attended once a month from Asheville. But tell of the consecration of the building and give various statistics with reference to the early life of the church. But shortly after the civil war the records became silent. At a later date,—in the early eighties,—services were held for a time at St. James' one Sunday in the month by Rev. E. A. Osborne, then rector of Calvary church, Arden; and at various times other temporary and fitful arrangements were made.

In 1897, while the late Thomas C. Wetmore was minister in charge, St. James' which had been growing steadily, was re-admitted as a parish. In 1899, Mr. Wetmore having resigned, Dr. E. E. Edwards was elected rector. About two years later he resigned, and in 1892 Rev. R. N. Wilcox, the present rector was called.

During the rectorship of Dr. Edwards the restoration of the church was begun through the generosity of Miss Fannie L. Wetmore of New York; and this work continued through a number of years was carried out in such a manner as not to change the graceful lines of the building.

During the past year a handsome rectory has been built at a cost of about \$8,000.

The parish register shows a communicant list of more than 60, and more than 100 baptized persons.